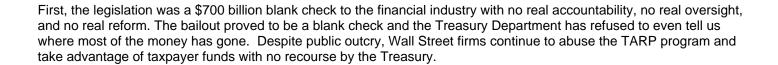
(March 17, 2009) Lipinski: "LOOPHOLES IN THE FAULTY WALL STREET BAILOUT BILL HAVE led to PREDICTAB

Lipinski: "LOOPHOLES IN THE FAULTY WALL STREET BAILOUT BILL HAVE led to PREDICTABLE abuseS of taxpayer funds BY AIG AND OTHERS"
"The recent revelations that AIG - recipient of over \$160 billion in taxpayer-funded bailout money - has funneled over \$55 billion to banks overseas and paid \$220 million in executive bonuses are appalling, but should come as no surprise to anyone who read the bailout legislation. Loopholes in the faulty \$700 billion Wall Street bailout bill have led to these predictable abuses of taxpayer funds by AIG and others.
"Last Fall I agreed that we needed to boost the economy by getting banks to start lending money again to qualified individuals and small businesses, but I opposed the bailout legislation because I believed that the \$700 billion bill was full of loopholes and was not the right solution to our ailing financial system. I voted against the initial bailout bill that failed in the House, I voted against the revised bill that passed even though it did not fix the loopholes, and then in January I voted in favor of the failed attempt to stop the Treasury from releasing the second \$350 billion.
"Unfortunately, since the bailout was passed lending has not increased, the stock market has dropped 33%, and many of the loopholes in the bill have been exploited to the detriment of American taxpayers."
There were seven major loopholes in the bailout legislation that Congressman Lipinski pointed out in October when explaining why he opposed the bill. Below is the list of objections that Lipinski laid out (shown in italics) along with an update on the current situation as it pertains to each of these.

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Second, the \$700 billion bailout bill would only drive American taxpayers into even more debt with little chance of recovering taxpayer dollars. America's debt has grown significantly since October, fast approaching \$10 trillion, but since the problems that were intended to be fixed by the bailout still remain and we don't even know where the money went, it is even more doubtful today that taxpayers will be repaid.

Third, I am deeply concerned that American taxpayer dollars will wind up bailing out foreign banks. Since the Treasury Department will not tell us who the money has been given to, we know very little about where it has gone. This week, AIG disclosed that it has awarded over \$55 billion in American taxpayer funds to foreign banks, including \$11.9 billion to Societe Generale, France's third largest bank, \$11.8 billion to Deutsche Bank, Germany's largest financial institution, and \$8.5 billion to Barclays PLC, headquartered in England. While I object to the way taxpayer funds were disbursed to Wall Street in general, it is even worse to see these dollars go to foreign banks.

Fourth, the multimillionaire Wall Street CEOs who created this crisis are not being held accountable. There is nothing in the bill that would put an iron-clad prohibition to ensure that tax dollars will not serve to further enrich the multimillionaire executives who drove these financial institutions into the ground. More and more stories continue to come out about executives receiving hefty bonuses and taking expensive trips on the taxpayer's dime. Just this week, AIG had the audacity to pay out over \$220 million in so-called ' retention awards' -- bonuses -- to the very people who created and sold the toxic assets that precipitated the banking downfall. Furthermore, last year Wall Street paid \$18.4 billion to executives of failing financial companies. Recoupment of these disbursements will be difficult because they were not forbidden by the bailout legislation, but the Administration and Congress must do everything possible to get these taxpayer dollars back.

